

Community and Justice Leadership Team

One of the first tasks of the leadership team was to create a theological rationale, a mandate, and describe membership and our responsibilities for the committee, they are as follows:

Theological rationale

Realizing that God is calling us to expand our faith and theological understanding of a world-community where human dignity is defended, creation is mended, and gifts are shared for the good of all. This keystone of God's vision of justice, compassion, and action leads us deeper into the world and requires us to be present in our communities.

Mandate

To find ways of planting ourselves firmly in our neighbourhoods, listening to the people there, offering encouragement, and hope. We are called to build transformative communities of hope.

Responsibilities

To provide support and accountability to Community Ministries in our region, Right Relations committee, address social issues, build connections with community and environment networks, support BUC initiative (Philippines), and the Literacy Centre in Haiti.

The Community and Justice Leadership Team is accountable to the Regional Council and reports regularly.

Membership

1. People interested in addressing social justice issues in our region;
2. Creating a cluster or clusters that will move faith to action;
3. Strengthening individual and community relationships;
4. Having fun.

The work that the Leadership team has been engaged in over year 2019 – June 2020 is as follows:

1. Community Ministries

- In the past, JGER provided support and ensured accountability of community ministries through annual or bi-annual site visits (St. Columba House, MCM, Cocla etc) Community and Justice Leadership has agreed to carry on with this responsibility.

2. Structure of the committee

- The leadership team has agreed that Patricia Lisson would be the chair and Paula Kline secretary for 2020.
- Chair will be the social justice rep on the regional executive.
- It was agreed we would be meet 4 times annually in person (location to be determined) and by zoom when additional meetings are required
- We would like to create a process to deal efficiently with issues that need, quick attention: e.g. letters to government; we also need to determine how we translate English documents into French

3. Bill 40

- The leadership team reviewed and address key areas of Bill 40, in particular issues around Spiritual animators. They ensure that topics such as bullying, diversity,

homophobia, etc. are addressed in our schools, fostering the ability of youth to engage in critical analysis and questioning

4. Bill 21

- A letter to protest Bill 21 was sent to the gov't on the approval of the regional executive
- The chair and secretary both participated in a press conference spring 2019 with other inter-faith leaders that was widely covered in French & English media

5. Dominique Learning Center

- This project was developed by Beaconsfield United and was supported by the Montreal Presbytery the year of the earthquake and we discussed ways to provide our ongoing support.

6. BUC initiative 3

- Community and Justice Leadership Team received updates from the BUC. Initiative there was a delegation being set up to visit the Philippines in April for a human rights event
- The situation is extremely dangerous with UCC Filipino partners listed on a terrorist list, which means our delegates would have that listing as well;
- Political assassinations continue and are indeed increasing: Filipino clergy partners must always be accompanied in their travels;
- For these reasons it is important to express our solidarity through this trip despite the dangers;
- The conditions on the ground will be very difficult – extremely hot temperatures and, depending where the human right event will take place, possible long treks through jungle and over mountains.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia Lisson, Diaconal Minister